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Letter dated 27 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to send you the report of the twelfth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council, which was held on 13 and 14 November 2014 at the Greentree Foundation in Manhasset, New York (see annex). The final report has been compiled in accordance with the Chatham House Rule under the sole responsibility of the Permanent Mission of Finland.

On the basis of the very positive feedback that we have received from the participants each year, the Government of Finland remains committed to sponsoring the workshop as an annual event. The Government of Finland hopes that the report will contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the work of the Security Council.

I should be grateful, accordingly, if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kai **Sauer**
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 27 April 2015 from the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

"Hitting the ground running": twelfth annual workshop for newly elected members of the Security Council

13 and 14 November 2014

Greentree Foundation

Manhasset, New York

The Government of Finland, in cooperation with Edward C. Luck and the Security Council Affairs Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the Secretariat, convened the twelfth annual workshop for the newly elected members of the Security Council on 13 and 14 November 2014.

The annual workshops serve two essential functions. First and foremost, they help to familiarize the newly elected members with the practice, procedure and working methods of the Council so that they are in a position to "hit the ground running" when they join the Council the following January. That is the founding and sustaining mandate of the workshops. Second, and increasingly evident over time, the series also provides current members with a uniquely valuable opportunity to reflect on their work in an informal and interactive setting.

The opening dinner on 13 November featured welcoming remarks by the Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations, Ambassador Kai Sauer, and a keynote address by the Chancellor of the Australian National University and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, Gareth Evans.

The full-day programme on 14 November included three round-table sessions that focused on the following themes:

(a) State of the Security Council 2014: taking stock and looking ahead (session I);

(b) Working methods and subsidiary bodies (session II);

(c) Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2014 (session III).

Opening dinner

In his keynote address, Mr. Evans underscored both the challenging environment facing the Security Council and the high level of expectation that it would say or do something meaningful about every issue. The daily grind of the urgent, he noted, tended to leave little time for those matters that in the long run could be even more important to the long-term credibility of the institution. The Council had performed well in terms of compelling the Syrian Arab Republic to give up its chemical weapons; authorizing humanitarian access there without the consent of the regime; approving peacekeeping missions with robust civilian protection mandates; enforcing multiple sanctions regimes; making referrals to the International Criminal Court; preventing an imminent massacre in Libya; and recognizing the core responsibility to protect principles. It had also responded decisively to the threats of Ebola and terrorism, as well as consulting more widely

and deliberating more openly. However, he continued, the Council had done little about pressing human security challenges in large swathes of Africa and the Middle East or about the acute crises in Ukraine, Gaza, the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. To keep its authority from sliding away, he suggested that the members of the Council should consider specific steps relating to peacekeeping and conflict resolution, responsibility to protect and military intervention, veto self-denial, cooperative security and national interest and the structure of the Council.

Peacekeeping and conflict resolution

According to Mr. Evans, the recently launched High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, chaired by José Ramos-Horta, would need to make tough and far-reaching recommendations to close the gap between the ambitious mandates given to peacekeepers and the inadequate resources and capacities with which they were provided to carry them out. He laid much of the blame for the gaps in equipment, logistical support, training and, in some cases, leadership on foot-dragging by those countries in the global North with the world's most capable militaries.

In his view, the rhetorical embrace of conflict prevention by the Council had not been matched by sufficient attention to enhancing early warning and briefing mechanisms. Major human rights violations might be precursors to armed conflict, yet the commendable Human Rights Up Front initiative of the Secretary-General lacked measures for ensuring the full engagement of the Council in mainstreaming human rights considerations in its work. In that context, he urged the members of the Council to encourage the Secretary-General to make fuller use of his authority under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations to bring to the attention of the Council "any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security".

Responsibility to protect and military intervention

Mr. Evans contended that it was hugely important for the members of the Council to find a way to overcome their differences over the possibility of coercive military intervention under pillar three of the strategy for implementing the responsibility to protect. Otherwise, there was a real possibility that the horrors of Rwanda and Srebrenica would be repeated. In his assessment, the other aspects of the strategy were not only alive and well, they were being applied in specific situations. Rather than revisiting the differences over how resolution 1973 (2011) had been implemented, it would be more productive to have a focused discussion in the Council on how to achieve a consensus on when and how to use force in extreme situations in which mass atrocities were unfolding and there were no other means to prevent them and to protect civilian populations.

The initiative of the Government of Brazil on responsibility while protecting provided one possible way forward, in his view. It had two critical elements. One would be a systematic debate within the Council on the applicability of the prudential criteria, including last resort, proportionality and the balance of consequences, put forward in "The responsibility to protect", the 2001 report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty that he had co-chaired. The second would be an enhanced monitoring and review process. Although acknowledging that there had been some resistance to those proposals, he

contended that there were some promising signs that all the members of the Council were beginning to recognize that those matters would have to be revisited if drift back to the "bad old days" — when either such assaults on common humanity were seen as nobody else's business or military action to stop them was taken in defiance of the Charter — was to be avoided.

Veto self-denial

Mr. Evans urged the five permanent members of the Council to give serious consideration to the transformative proposal of the Government of France for them to voluntarily forswear use of the veto in situations in which the Secretary-General had certified that mass atrocities were imminent or taking place and none of the five claimed that vital national interests were at stake. That could take the form either of a formal code of conduct or of a statement of principles by the five members. In his view, no other step could so dramatically, visibly or immediately demonstrate their commitment to the true spirit of the Charter and add to perceptions of the legitimacy of the Council.

Cooperative security and the national interest

Mr. Evans also called for a change in mindset in terms of how Governments perceived the relationship between collective and national interests. While the daily business of the Council involved the identification of common values and objectives, there was a tendency in national capitals to put the advancement of global public goods on a lower plane than the protection of relatively narrow and short-term national interests of a geopolitical or economic nature. In his view, there was a third national interest in being and being seen to be a good international citizen — that should rank with the other two. The pursuit of "purposes beyond ourselves", such as poverty alleviation, environmental problems, nuclear arms control, faraway violations of human rights and the prevention of mass atrocities, were really at the core of national interests in the long haul.

He argued that there were hard-headed returns for any State that respected international law and was actively engaged in trying to find cooperative solutions to common problems. The first was that the enhancement of the reputation of a State was bound to work, over time, to its economic and security advantage. The second was that it would benefit from reciprocity if diplomats and policymakers in other countries believed that one was taking their problems seriously. That way, it should be possible to square the circle between realists and idealists, just as the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) and the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty had sought new ways to think about common problems and build common ground.

Council structure

Noting that even modest proposals, such as allowing non-permanent members to serve consecutive terms, had not gained traction, Mr. Evans called for a renewed effort to make the composition of the Council better reflect the world of the twenty-first century. Although a larger and differently constituted Council might have a harder time reaching consensus, in his view nothing ultimately trumped legitimacy. He stated that the Council, as currently constituted, lacked representational legitimacy, which could undermine its credibility and authority in much of the world

over the coming 15 years or less. It would not be wise, he cautioned, to assume that the legitimacy, credibility and authority of the Council, as currently managed and constituted, would continue indefinitely. In international affairs, some universally unpredicted events, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, could happen almost overnight. Suggesting that the foundations of the Council were a little more fragile than they appeared, he concluded that no institution had lost ground by anticipating the forces of change and working to accommodate them before being absolutely compelled to do so. The Council would be wise, he said, to begin straight away.

Session I
State of the Security Council 2014: taking stock and looking ahead

Moderator

Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė
Permanent Representative of Lithuania

Commentators

Ambassador François Delattre
Permanent Representative of France

Ambassador Dina Kawar
Permanent Representative of Jordan

Ambassador Wang Min
Deputy Permanent Representative of China

The agenda for session I contained the following questions:

- Given the emergence of acute regional and global threats over the past year, how well had the Council fulfilled its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security? In that regard, what had been some of the high and low points? How did its record in 2014 compare with that in 2013 or in earlier years?
- At the workshop in 2013, several participants had identified defining challenges or seminal tests for the Council in 2014. Those participants were the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic. How had the Council performed in each of those situations? What lessons, positive or negative, might be derived from each case?
- Developments on the ground, of course, rarely followed predictable paths and no one had anticipated the extent to which the work of the Council in 2014 would focus on the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, the dangerous conflict in Ukraine, the rapid rise of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as a virulent force in the Middle East or the violence in the State of Palestine and Israel. Would it be useful, nevertheless, to make some projections about unfinished business that was likely to absorb much of the Council's attention in 2015 and about possible new or growing threats to international peace and security over the course of the coming year?
- Although the Council had long been known more for its capacity to respond to crises than to anticipate and prevent them, at each annual workshop there were calls for improving its efforts at conflict prevention. Why had that proved so

difficult and what fresh approaches might be considered in 2015 and beyond? To what extent had increments in the preventive diplomacy capacities of the Secretariat made a difference and how might the Council or the Secretary-General better employ them?

- The rise of ISIL had compelled many national capitals to reassess the evolving geopolitical situation in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and adjacent countries. The highly sectarian agenda and terrorist tactics of ISIL were compelling a confluence of human protection and counter-terrorist narratives in a manner not seen before, either in the work of the Council or in national policies. What were the implications for the efforts of the Council to protect civilian populations and to counter terrorism in the Middle East and elsewhere? Was there more that the Council could contribute to the struggles against Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab and other groups that targeted civilian populations?

- Spurred by the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the violence in South Sudan and the Central African Republic, the number of forcibly displaced people had surged to the highest level globally since the founding of the United Nations almost 70 years previously. Was that an indicator of how well the Council, as well as many other actors, had been doing in bolstering human security? Could more be done in 2015 to address the factors behind that trend in a thematic or cross-cutting manner beyond the distinct circumstances of each contributing conflict? Should the more assertive efforts to protect displaced populations in South Sudan become a model for the future? What were the implications for peace and security of such large numbers of displaced people, in particular if they were displaced for years to come?

- The Council had achieved significant successes in addressing specific country situations in recent years. As discussed at the workshop in 2013, however, the record for sustaining those gains had been mixed at best. How could the Council, as a body that had been more focused on keeping or restoring the peace, improve its performance in longer-term peacebuilding? How acute were the risks of backsliding in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, South Sudan and Yemen, among other places in which the Council had been deeply engaged? To what extent could regional and subregional partners or other United Nations bodies, agencies and programmes help to build on the efforts of the Council in those situations? Could the Peacebuilding Commission become a more effective partner for the Council in that regard? Who should take the lead in encouraging greater collaboration with civil society and with adjacent countries?

- In recent years, where had collaboration with regional or subregional arrangements been an important asset in the efforts of the Council in conflict prevention or post-conflict peacebuilding efforts? Where had the results been disappointing? In several areas where regional political organization was weak or not inclusive, such as East Asia, the Middle East and Eastern Europe, there were threats to peace and security on which the views of the permanent members did not always coincide. Might the non-permanent members of the Council be helpful in such situations, for example through consensus-building and bridge-building? Were there examples where such efforts by non-permanent members had helped to ease tensions or narrow differences in the recent past?

- Peacekeeping operations, from the Golan Heights to South Sudan, had faced demanding and dangerous conditions over the past year, even as human, material and financial resources had been strained. At the same time, the Council had made significant efforts to make relationships with troop- and police-contributing countries more interactive and to review and adjust individual operations as needed in the light of changing circumstances. What were the prospects for the larger peacekeeping enterprises and for specific missions over the coming year?

- One topic that had not generated much discussion at the previous workshop — the Council's relationship with the International Criminal Court — had provoked substantial conversations since then, both inside and outside the Council. A Council mission had visited the Court in August and the Prosecutor had briefed the members of the Council during its recent open debate on its working methods. The repeated commission of atrocities by armed groups, such as ISIL and Boko Haram, and the findings of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had raised questions about when the Council should or should not make referrals to the Court. Was that a subject on which informal consultations among Council members could be productive in the coming year, whether in a generic or situation-specific context?

- In recent years, the Council and its subsidiary bodies had paid increasing attention to what some participants at the workshop in 2013 had termed its "rights cluster," while the Secretary-General had launched his Human Rights Up Front initiative. In both cases, however, implementation gaps remained. For example, how should the thematic engagement of the Council on issues such as women and peace and security, children and armed conflict, and the protection of civilians, be linked operationally to its situation-specific work? Once those themes were added to peacekeeping or political mandates, how could the Council ensure that appropriate and sufficient resources were provided for those purposes or assess the extent to which they were implemented on the ground?

- Had the Council achieved an appropriate balance in terms of attention to thematic and situation-specific matters? To date in 2014, about 74 per cent of Council resolutions and 71 per cent of presidential statements had been devoted to situation-specific and region-specific issues. Had the deeper challenge been met of applying strategic insights from cross-cutting themes to approaches by the Council to specific crisis situations?

- The newly elected members were joining the Council at a propitious, perhaps historic, time. They would be members as the Council turned 70. In their second year on the Council, it would recommend a new Secretary-General for appointment by the General Assembly. Over the course of the coming year, would the members of the Council address the procedures by which they would make the critical recommendation to the Assembly? What plans were being considered to mark the first seven decades of the Council?

Assessment of the performance of the Security Council in 2014

Several speakers asserted that the energy level and productivity of the Council had been relatively high in 2014, at least in terms of quantitative measures. The

workload had been heavy, as reflected in the number of meetings held, resolutions, presidential statements and press statements produced and the range of issues addressed. By those measures, 2014 had been more productive than the two previous years. Proficiency in producing resolutions, however, was not equivalent to effectiveness on the ground. More meetings did not necessarily constitute better performance in terms of maintaining international peace and security. The Council had been busier than ever, but it was hard to know whether there had been a direct link between productivity and impact. At times, noted a participant, the Council had made a difference without even including a situation in its public programme of work. It had discussed Ukraine many times without much effect, while the sanctions regime imposed by the Council had brought the Islamic Republic of Iran to the negotiating table on non-proliferation matters, the relatively few resolutions on the subject notwithstanding. Neither scholars nor practitioners had made much progress in developing qualitative measures for assessing the impact either of the decisions of the Council or of the peace operations that it had authorized. Although the question of qualitative indices had been considered at earlier workshops, it still needed further thought and analysis.

According to several participants, when others assessed the work of the Council, perceptions and expectations mattered. Did they perceive its treatment of different countries and situations to be fair and free of double standards? In national law enforcement, one accepted a speeding ticket on the assumption that others would be treated in the same way. If some States were seen to be above the law or the Council perceived to be practising double standards, then its credibility and effectiveness would decline. That sometimes appeared to be the case when human rights violations in some countries were treated as more acceptable than similar violations elsewhere. The credibility of the Council would suffer if others did not trust it and the way that it made decisions, and if they did not perceive its members as acting as good global citizens. Within the Council, members had treated each other more kindly and respectfully in 2014, with fewer personal attacks, but the lack of trust had often been apparent.

Expectations about the Council's capacity and performance tended to be too high as well. The Secretariat, for example, had suggested that Council action on relevant resolutions could open the door to the provision of assistance to 2 million displaced people in the Syrian Arab Republic, but even much smaller relief efforts had taken a long time to accomplish on the ground. In the Middle East, many people mistakenly believed that the Council had a magic wand when it came to the State of Palestine and could do what it wanted there. In general, others needed to understand that addressing an issue in the Council could not offer a panacea in difficult and protracted situations, where neighbours and those with leverage could often make the most difference. Too often, its resolutions and decisions were not enough to produce results on the ground. The Council was an executive body, which made some very good decisions that then proved difficult to implement because of geopolitical or other factors beyond its control. Others were bound to judge the Council by its failures, noted a participant, given that the human consequences of those failures could be profound. In that sense, great expectations were intrinsic to the nature of the work and mandate of the Council.

On the plus side of the balance sheet for 2014, participants identified progress in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia, as well as on counter-terrorism and foreign terrorist fighters.

There had been more references in resolutions to the protection of civilians and to justice mechanisms and accountability. Profound divisions over the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic notwithstanding, the Council had managed to agree on two important resolutions intended to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to continue to oversee the effort to dismantle and remove chemical weapons from the country. It had managed, to date, to maintain a political firewall between tensions over the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine and the rest of the urgent business of the Council. The political dynamics of those situations and in the deliberations of the Council thereon could be highly complex. It should be recognized as well that other actors, such as regional and subregional arrangements and influential countries, also often deserved credit for successes. That had been the case in Bangladesh and in several situations in Africa.

It was noted that there had been slippage in some situations in 2014. Libya and Yemen had descended into chaos, the unanticipated Ebola epidemic had threatened stability in West Africa; war was raging in South Sudan, where sanctions might have to be considered; there had been a rising number of terrorist attacks in northern Mali; and several armed groups, such as Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIL, had become increasingly bold in employing terrorism. The performance of the Council on the State of Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic had been mixed, and there was concern that the war in Gaza and continuing tensions in Jerusalem could become the final nails in the coffin of the peace process. It was suggested that the Council should devote more time to, and undertake more reflection on, the crises and challenges in the Middle East. It was also noted, however, that there appeared to be a gap between expectations and the capacity of the Council to deliver on such long-standing and intractable conflicts.

In short, it was observed, 2015 was shaping up to be a very busy year in the life of the Council. Among the upcoming country and regional challenges were the threats posed by ISIL, Al-Qaida and Boko Haram; Gaza and the status of Jerusalem; foreign terrorist fighters; transitions in Burkina Faso and elsewhere in Africa; maintaining stability in Lebanon; worrisome trends in Bosnia and Herzegovina; pre-empting terrorists so that they were not always one step ahead; and addressing the growing crisis in Libya. There would be a need to hold peacekeeping operations, the special representatives of the Secretary-General and the Council itself more accountable in places such as the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo to ensure that they delivered on the implementation of their mandates. Leadership — the human element — could be critical and that required closer oversight in 2015 by the Council. There had been important innovations in peacekeeping, such as the use of drones and more robust tactics, but resources remained inadequate, in particular in terms of enabling equipment, such as helicopters. Meanwhile, the expansion of civilian protection and human rights mandates, including the Human Rights Up Front initiative, demanded more from peace operations. In that dynamic context, the way in which the Council engaged with the peacekeeping review launched by the Secretary-General could be of critical importance.

Those and other opportunities could make 2015, the seventieth year of the Council, a time for reflection on the root causes of its failures, as well as its successes. As a participant noted, there was an opportunity to identify areas where the Council could do better. As others put it, events were creating an identity crisis for the Council and, if handled thoughtfully, that could prove to be a good thing. There should be a greater effort to focus on the issues that matter most and where

the Council could do the most good. Changing demands were transforming the Council and the way that it went about its work, meaning that 2015 could be a seminal year in terms of improving its impact and capacity to enhance international peace and security. However, that would require carving out more time and opportunities, such as the current workshop, to discuss and reflect on how the Council was doing as an institution in addressing the security challenges of the twenty-first century.

Challenges ahead

Many participants cited efforts to improve prevention of conflict and mass atrocities, collaboration with regional and subregional arrangements and/or peace operations as the prime generic challenges facing the Council in 2015. All those issues had also received prominent attention at previous workshops. Speakers pointed out that conflict prevention was a tool supported by all Council members, in part because, when it succeeded, the chances of differences arising within the Council were reduced. That said, more reflection was needed on how the Council was best placed to enhance prevention, given that it was not well equipped to conduct preventive diplomacy directly. Other actors, including the Secretary-General, his envoys and special representatives, the Department of Political Affairs and regional and subregional bodies, were generally better placed to implement prevention mandates from the Council, which could be an enabler by providing political support and messaging at key points. At the workshops and elsewhere, including in thematic debates and presidential statements, everyone affirmed their commitment to prevention, but then the Council did not actually undertake conflict prevention. It should be carried out on the ground, not just be treated as a thematic issue. Prevention should be part of the DNA of Council members. There were ample tools in Chapter VI of the Charter and more use could be made of the authority of the Secretary-General under Article 99 of the Charter. If the members believed in prevention as much as they said that they did, then they should be open to employing all the tools available to the Council. In some situations, there was a lack of trust in the Council taking preventive measures because of concern about interventionist or national agendas. To be more effective at prevention, the members must first allay those concerns.

In that regard, several participants addressed the question of horizon-scanning sessions. It sounded like a worthwhile initiative, given that conflict prevention was much less costly than conflict management, but it did not meet expectations in practice. It was understandable that countries would be reluctant to see their internal affairs discussed by the Council, but without such early engagement how could the Council play an effective role in conflict prevention or carry out its responsibility to protect? Given that members of the Council had little or no appetite for horizon-scanning sessions as they had been conducted, attention should be paid as to how to make them more effective. Horizon scanning made more sense on some issues and at some points than others. For example, there had been many Council meetings on the crisis in Ukraine, meaning that horizon-scanning sessions had not been needed. In the case of Mali, however, it was suggested that the members should have paid closer attention to the horizon-scanning briefings by the Secretariat. If they had, the Council might have responded in a more timely and effective manner. Sometimes, however, there were alternative formats, such as Arria-formula meetings, informal interactive dialogues and briefings by the United Nations High Commissioner for

Human Rights or other officials with knowledge of unfolding events, which could serve the same purpose. More and earlier interactions with the Peacebuilding Commission and other bodies could sometimes be helpful, if only to hear what they had to say about such situations.

As in the past, participants in the workshop had much to say about collaboration with regional and subregional arrangements. Chapter VIII of the Charter was remarkably forward-looking, given the lack of operational regional organizations when it had been formulated, but its provisions were not adequate to guide current layered and complex relationships between the Council and its regional and subregional partners. Sometimes parties were more ready to accept intervention by those groups than by the Council. In some situations, they should take the lead in implementation, as had often been the case in Africa, but that did not mean that the Council could abrogate its unique responsibilities under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security. It should strengthen its working relationships with regional and subregional bodies, even as it sought to ensure that the provisions of Chapter VIII were respected. Collaboration with such groups could assist the efforts of the Council in conflict prevention and peacekeeping, although they should not be left to their own devices, given that they might have distinct interests and perspectives.

Regional approaches had been helpful in Timor-Leste, Bougainville (Papua New Guinea) and Solomon Islands, as well as in the Central African Republic, where cooperation with the African Union had facilitated the transformation of the peacekeeping force, and elsewhere in Africa. The Council should seek closer relationships with subregional groups in Africa, as well as with the African Union. Although most of those organizations were not formally represented in New York, ways should be found to work with them on the ground. Meetings with regional organizations were essential, but they should be more lively and interactive, with more in-depth and honest exchanges. Some of the sessions with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, although valuable, had been overly ritualistic and symbolic. Although working with regional and subregional arrangements could be productive, that should not become the mantra of the Council, because that did not represent a solution to every situation. Although neighbours might know the dynamics on the ground well, they might also have particular interests in a given situation. For example, while the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had generally played a constructive role in South Sudan, it had sometimes displayed divergent interests in developments there. On the other hand, there had been a tendency for Council members to listen to regional representatives only when they told them what they wanted to hear, when their value was to provide fresh perspectives.

In terms of the challenges facing peacekeeping operations, several participants commented on the need for both greater resources and greater accountability. The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali needed to be enhanced to respond to the rise of terrorist attacks in the north. For all the enhancements that had been made to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), it was still unclear whether it would be able to offer sufficient protection to the people of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, or whether those committing atrocities would be held accountable. Although MONUSCO had been authorized six months in advance of its deployment, less than half its mandated civilian staff were in place. The

Council had still not worked out how to oversee staff and force generation adequately. It needed to hold itself and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations accountable for delivering on mandates, in part by becoming more serious about the mandate review process. Those reviews should be seen as opportunities to view current operations more strategically.

According to several participants, the Council should contribute fully and actively to the review of peacekeeping being conducted by the Secretary-General. It should also ensure that the review was discussed substantively and interactively at his retreat with the Council early in 2015. Peacekeeping operations should be re-evaluated in terms of how to respond to changing circumstances without abandoning the core principles of peacekeeping. Members still lacked ways of measuring the productivity and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, especially in qualitative terms. Without that, how could members be confident that they had made the right decisions?

The key to success was less the number of troops on the ground than the quality of their leadership, including both force commanders and the special representatives of the Secretary-General. It was too rare that special representatives included new information in their briefings or told the Council bluntly what was happening on the ground. Special representatives were not always willing to assume the kind of leadership responsibility that was needed, including by providing the Council with candid advice and assessments. A positive spirit within the Council might not suffice to produce the troops or leadership needed on the ground and in some situations, such as South Sudan, adding troops could not begin to address the underlying problems.

There was a more extensive discussion of the prevention of mass atrocities and of human rights than at previous workshops. Speakers suggested that, as a result of the Human Rights Up Front initiative and the increasing attention paid to human rights challenges, expectations were growing and the Council could not remain silent in the face of unfolding mass atrocities. It must speak out when crimes against humanity were committed against innocent women and children. Participants must see those issues as human beings and not just as representatives of their countries. No one could be above the law. The Council, it was emphasized, needed to measure itself against the human consequences of failure. At that point, the humanitarian and protection agendas were coming together as never before. The number of forcibly displaced people was at the highest level globally since the founding of the United Nations and the trajectory looked even worse. "Human rights up front" was a good concept, but members still had to find ways to apply it to specific situations. It had been puzzling as to why the Council had not made more use of it and why there had been resistance to including a reference to it in resolution 2171 (2014) on conflict prevention.

One speaker drew attention to the initiative seeking to persuade the five permanent members to agree to exercise restraint in the employment of the veto in situations of unfolding mass atrocities. Another participant responded that it would be difficult to gain agreement on that initiative. Curbing mass atrocities and serious human rights violations were important goals, but they needed to be pursued in a balanced way so as not to undermine stability and peace. A third participant commented that conflict prevention required the Council to engage in places where

there were widespread human rights abuses or atrocities before actual conflict broke out. It needed to be willing to put situations of serious abuse on its agenda.

Sharpening tools

A recurrent theme in the discussion was the need to sharpen the Council's twentieth-century tools to meet the disparate and dynamic challenges of the twenty-first century. For example, several speakers welcomed the refocusing of its attention on countering terrorism, including the swift agreement on resolution 2178 (2014) on foreign terrorist fighters. All the counter-terrorism machinery of the United Nations notwithstanding, the Council continued to have a hard time keeping up with a constantly changing terrorist threat. After paying too little attention to the transitions in Afghanistan and Iraq, the Council had begun to recognize the threat posed by ISIL, which both sought to hold territory and managed to have some appeal to populations in those areas. Given that sanctions had proved to be one of the most effective tools of the Council for addressing terrorism, the just-completed review of the work of the sanctions committees could prove timely. Because those committees were chaired by non-permanent members, they could offer incoming members a good opportunity to make a difference.

The more flexible formats employed by the Council in recent years could offer the newly elected members greater opportunities to get up to speed on issues and to leave a mark on the work of the Council. The interactive dialogue on Mali, for example, had provided a chance for a real exchange and a keener appreciation of the operational challenges facing the mission and the force commander. The concerted effort by three non-permanent members to gain agreement on the humanitarian assistance resolutions relating to the Syrian Arab Republic demonstrated the role that newly elected members could sometimes play in bridging even wide gaps between the permanent members. Although the ultimate route to addressing humanitarian misery in the Syrian Arab Republic would need to be a political one, the cross-border delivery of humanitarian assistance was providing some modest relief for vulnerable populations. A continuing effort would be needed in the Council in 2015. Service as President of the Council — a position held two thirds of the time by non-permanent members — could also offer an opportunity for the incoming members to handle the complex political dynamics within the Council in productive ways. Although non-permanent members had demonstrated significant leadership on thematic issues in recent years, they should avoid diverting attention to superficial issues or to those that might raise questions about encroachment on the mandates of other organs.

There was also considerable discussion of the role of information and first-hand observation in the deliberations and decision-making of the Council. Several participants acknowledged the value of Council missions, both to have a better feel for conditions on the ground and to deliver messages to parties and local populations directly. The visit to Yemen, for example, had provided insights that were not possible to obtain in New York, where distant crises could seem like an abstraction. Likewise, it could be very helpful to be briefed by representatives of non-governmental organizations with long experience on the ground in places of concern to the Council. If members of the Council were willing to engage their embassies around the world and to share the relevant information with other members, that could also help to make Council deliberations better informed. A participant expressed concern, however, that delegates had a tendency to improvise

too much rather than taking a more strategic approach to deliberations and that the Secretariat sometimes provided unverified information to members.

The discussion in session I underscored a series of gaps in the work of the Council. There had been gaps between the mandate of the Council and its capacity; between its workload and productivity and the impact on the ground; between the expectations others had and its ability to deliver; and between its decisions and means of overseeing their implementation.

Session II
Working methods and subsidiary bodies

Moderator

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On the agenda for session II, the following questions were posed:

- Over the years, the "Hitting the ground running" workshops had served as an incubator for fresh ideas for refinements to Council working methods. The previous year had been no exception. Once again, many participants had stressed that informal consultations needed to live up to their name by becoming more informal, more consultative and more interactive. Since then, several Presidents had taken steps in that direction, for example by posing questions to briefers or by clustering interventions. How could those efforts be made more sustainable? Would a note by the President be helpful in that regard?

- The report of the workshop in 2013 noted that "it was agreed, as three outcomes of the eleventh "Hitting the ground running" workshop, that (a) a meeting of the force commanders with the members of the Security Council would be arranged annually in June when they came to New York to see the Secretary-General; (b) a similar session would be held with police commissioners when they visited New York in November; and (c) it would become regular practice to have force commanders participate by video teleconference when Special Representatives of the Secretary-General briefed the Council". Given that progress was being made in implementing those recommendations, should that pattern of interactions be regularized in Council procedures?

- Since the previous workshop, there had been notes by the President on several of the issues addressed at that session, including the following:

  - In a note dated 14 April 2014, the President addressed the question of penholders, stressing that "any member of the Security Council may be a penholder", that "the members of the Security Council affirm their

commitment to enhancing the participation of all members of the Security Council in the drafting of documents, including resolutions, presidential statements and press statements of the Council", that penholders would be encouraged to hold timely consultations with other members of the Council and that Council members would "continue to informally consult with the broader United Nations membership" (S/2014/268);

- In a note dated 5 June 2014, the President described an earlier, more regular and more interactive process for appointing Chairs of the 22 subsidiary bodies of the Council and for transferring responsibilities from the outgoing to the incoming Chair (S/2014/393);
- In a note dated 4 August 2014, the President declared that the members had agreed "to continue to enhance dialogue among all Council members, in particular in crisis or fast-evolving situations, so that the Council may respond more efficiently and therefore better fulfil its responsibility of maintaining international peace and security" (S/2014/565);

- Although it was early, was there reason to believe that those steps were beginning to make a difference on those matters of long-standing concern, as frequently voiced by non-permanent and incoming members? The list of 2014 penholders, for example, appeared heavily weighted towards some permanent members, as in the past. Would any newly elected members be interested in sharing any such responsibilities with another member, as suggested at past workshops?

- Given that the previous round of appointments of Chairs of the subsidiary bodies of the Council had not gone entirely smoothly, would the adjustments in the note dated 5 June make a difference as the newly elected members would assume those responsibilities less than two months from the date of the workshop? In particular, in his note, the President had described efforts to make the handover more seamless through "an informal written briefing of the work done during the outgoing chairmanship", the provision of other informal materials and draft documents and the assistance of the Secretariat. Were those plans and preparations under way? What were the views of newly elected members on how that process should proceed?

- Had the good, if general, intentions expressed in the note dated 4 August to improve intra-Council communications been tested in any crises over the past three months? If so, had there been a noticeable difference?

- A participant at the workshop in 2013 had urged a review of the effectiveness of the sanctions regimes authorized by the Council and overseen by its subsidiary bodies, with attention paid to the linkages between them and to developing common standards for how they were implemented. The resulting reports of the high-level review of United Nations sanctions and of the deliberations of the Interagency Working Group on Sanctions contained a host of conclusions and recommendations.

- Which of the recommended steps would most enhance the performance of the Council in that area and which would be most helpful to incoming members

who might undertake the leadership of one or more of the sanctions committees?

- In the light of the heavy burden associated with heading any of the sanctions committees, what kind of training and orientation programmes would newly elected members like to have offered by the outgoing Chairs and/or the Secretariat?
- What capacities did the Secretariat, and especially the Security Council Affairs Division, need to best assist the work of the sanctions committees?
- How could due process concerns be addressed, especially regarding listing and delisting?
- More broadly, had the recommendations set out in the annex to the note by the President dated 26 July 2010 (S/2010/507) been fully implemented? Were there steps that had been agreed but not yet carried out consistently in practice?
- In terms of conflict prevention, did the Council receive sufficient and sufficiently timely information from the Secretariat, from special representatives of the Secretary-General in the field and from civil society? Why had the horizon briefings from the Department of Political Affairs fallen out of favour with some members and had a useful substitute been found? Had it been helpful to receive briefings from a wider circle of Secretariat officials, including from human rights, gender, humanitarian affairs and human protection perspectives? What kind of briefings would incoming members most value?
- Had the workings of the Council become sufficiently transparent (a) to non-permanent members, (b) to the larger membership of the United Nations and (c) to "we the peoples"? Were further steps needed at any of those three levels? Had the able and expanded work of the Security Council Affairs Division and Security Council Report succeeded in opening the work of the Council sufficiently to scrutiny and understanding by non-members and the public?
- Could more be done to improve communications and collaboration between the Council and other United Nations organs and bodies, such as the General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission? Where could those groups make their most substantive contributions to the work of the Council?
- As it approached 70, was the reputation of the Council what it ought to be? Was its credibility, authority and legitimacy waxing or waning? Should its members be concerned or confident in that regard? What, if anything, should they do about it?

Assessment of progress in enhancing working methods

Several speakers commented on how far the reform of the working methods of the Council had advanced over the years, although all saw room for further progress. From a long-term perspective, the changes in the way in which the Council went about its work were particularly striking. Most reforms had been adopted over the past two decades. In recent years, the Informal Working Group on

Documentation and Other Procedural Questions had played an active, even seminal, role in spurring the process of change. It had been critical for its good work to be followed up by implementation in the Council as a whole. The annual "Hitting the ground running" workshops were also widely credited with providing a forum for identifying and forging agreement on possible next steps. It was suggested that two or three items should be identified at the current workshop for follow-up in New York, as had been the practice in recent years. The modification of working methods had also reflected the need to sharpen twentieth-century tools, procedures and processes to better meet the political dynamics and security challenges of the early twenty-first century. The better the working methods of the Council, the higher would be its productivity. In an age of global communications, digital technology and social media, the demand for transparency was high and the Council could not afford to stand still and let others dominate messaging and agenda setting.

Working methods were a work in progress, neither static nor a finished product. Change would come step by step and by evolution and not by revolution. Usually, non-permanent members took the initiative, but they needed to enlist the support of the permanent members to ensure that there was a broad consensus within the Council for the implementation of the reforms. The process had worked best when sufficiently ripe issues were tackled first. Over time, the debates had become more productive and fact-based, as more information and analysis of trends in Council procedures and activities had become available to permit a more informed exchange. The repeated attempts since 1946 notwithstanding, the Council had never been able to go beyond its provisional rules of procedure. In some ways, that had become a virtue, because it allowed the Council to be more flexible and adaptable than other intergovernmental bodies and the master of its own procedures. Through improvisation, the Council had saved time and money, while being more responsive to changing circumstances and needs.

The general trend had been towards a Council that was more flexible, transparent and accountable. The Council was holding more public meetings than ever before. It heard from a wider range of briefers and non-members had greater access to its deliberations and activities. The presidential notes on penholders and speakers' lists reflected the effort to be more open and accountable, while the improved website, in multiple languages, had benefited members and non-members alike.

The growth in the length and complexity of Council resolutions, however, had been concerning. It was estimated that resolutions of recent years might contain three or four times as many tasks or mandates as those of 20 years previously. The most recent resolution on the peacekeeping operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo had included 38 mandates and 54 operative paragraphs. The members of the Council had not always appeared to be aware of the costs or the feasibility of implementing such multilayered resolutions. Some of the inflation in the length of resolutions stemmed from the desire of members to include references to various thematic issues and concerns. Stressing the need for restraint by penholders as well as other members, a participant recalled that, when instructed to do so, the drafters of a particular resolution had managed to keep the text under two pages.

Transparency, inclusiveness and relations with other bodies

The legitimacy of the Council depended, in part, on perceptions of its transparency and inclusiveness. Non-members had been seeking increased access to timely and accurate information about the continuing work of the Council, in addition to more opportunities to be involved in its activities and debates. The efforts of Security Council Report and the Security Council Affairs Division were praised in terms of having significantly improved the transparency of the Council in recent years. Transparency was needed not just for its own sake. In planning peacekeeping operations or renewing their mandates, for example, it was essential to consult and receive input from troop-contributing countries (see the discussion at previous workshops). In 2012, it was pointed out, the Council had almost mistakenly renewed the mandate in Timor-Leste without first consulting the leaders of the country or the troop-contributing countries. It was often helpful in preparing draft resolutions to consult neighbours, other countries in the region and/or regional and subregional arrangements that might have special insight into a situation. It was suggested that one outcome of the workshop could be an agreement to have the schedule of meetings of sanctions committees published in the *Journal of the United Nations*. Several participants agreed and no one objected. With the expanded employment of sanctions as a coercive tool falling short of using force, it was important for the wider membership to be kept informed of how the Council was implementing and monitoring sanctions regimes.

Several speakers called for a balance between transparency and confidentiality. While transparency should be the default position of the Council, it would never be completely transparent. There had been many cases and times when discretion had been required to advance the diplomatic and political process and to serve the core purpose of maintaining international peace and security. Others needed to understand that not all members of the Council worked on the same issue at the same time. The leaking of information might make it harder to achieve consensus within the Council and texting during consultations should be discouraged. Given that candid discussion among Council members was essential, it could be discouraging when third parties reacted to statements made in private meetings. Sometimes special representatives of the Secretary-General were more candid in their assessments in consultations than in public meetings. It was a myth that non-permanent members always sought greater transparency and permanent members opposed it, because both sought to enhance efficiency and productivity, as well as openness.

In seeking election to the Council, diplomats of candidate countries had often been told that reform of working methods was at the heart of improving the relationships of the Council with other actors, inside and outside the United Nations. The perceived lack of timely and full consultation had been repeatedly identified as the key problem. Being, and being perceived as being, more attentive to the wider United Nations membership could boost the credibility of the Council and increase the possibilities for implementing its decisions. It could, for example, hold more public meetings to enhance both transparency and inclusiveness, by giving non-members a sense of participation in its work. Refining working methods could improve outreach to the wider membership, while increasing their valuable substantive and political input into the work of the Council. At the same time, working methods should be designed to keep the Council efficient, sharp and focused. Closer collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission should be sought,

given that its mandate — to help to end conflict and consolidate peace — addressed post-conflict transitions, which had proved to be a major challenge for the Council, as noted above. Council members needed to have complete confidence in the information provided by the Secretariat on substantive issues.

Penholders and Chairs of subsidiary bodies

As was the case at the workshop in 2013, the discussion of how penholders and the Chairs of subsidiary bodies were selected was both extensive and lively. Although the issue of penholders might not be entirely ripe, the agreement on the President's note dated 14 April 2014 (S/2014/268) represented a critical step forward. The immediate question was how to implement its recommendations. Several participants spoke in favour of the notion of co-penholders, an idea also discussed at the previous workshop. Assuming that two heads were better than one, such an arrangement could be a good example of productive collaboration between a permanent and non-permanent member. Permanent members had the advantage of larger pools of experts, as well as far greater institutional memory. Some smaller delegations might lack the human and technical capacity required, but they could sometimes bring much-needed local expertise and regional access to such a pairing. It might be better not to adopt a rigid approach, given that situations varied. It was not always easy for two delegations to agree on language and delays could result. There had been a recent case in which a non-permanent member had simply picked up the pen, produced a strong draft and become the de facto penholder on that item. On the two humanitarian resolutions in 2014 relating to the Syrian Arab Republic, three non-permanent members had effectively shared the pen and, with considerable effort, fostered agreement within the Council.

There were divergent views on whether incoming members were being consulted in a sufficiently timely and interactive manner about the selection of Chairs for the subsidiary bodies of the Council, as addressed in the President's note dated 5 June (S/2014/393). For incoming members, it was important to know as early as possible about such assignments, both to be able to bring the right staff experts to New York and to permit a fuller transition period for working with the outgoing Chair. If a delegation expressed an interest in heading a particular body, it should be assumed that it had both the capacity and the interest to do it well. Experience had shown that a member would not put much effort into chairing a body that dealt with a subject in which it had little interest or expertise. At the same time, although an effort was made to have each newly elected member appointed to some of the Chairs in which it had expressed an interest, the time to sort through those interests was limited and none received all their preferences. It was a continuing process of consultations that would be facilitated if the elections in the General Assembly for Council membership were held earlier in the year, as planned for 2016.

Some committee assignments were more demanding than others, with the work cycle rising and falling over time. Permanent representatives should bear in mind that they normally served as Chair, while the other delegations were generally represented at a more junior expert level. The participants were reminded that just four years previously the elected members had not learned of their assignments for the following year until 31 December, meaning that there had been some improvement since. For the sake of the smooth running of those important groups, there appeared to be agreement on the desirability of informing incoming members

as soon as possible which subsidiary bodies they would be heading. Regarding the provisions of the President's note of 5 June (S/2014/393) on the transfer of responsibilities from outgoing to incoming Chairs, it was noted that the Secretariat had prepared a template for each subsidiary body that was to be completed by outgoing Chairs and offered them the opportunity to make their own observations that could benefit incoming Chairs.

There was some discussion as to why all the subsidiary bodies at that point, including the critical sanctions committees, were headed by non-permanent members. According to one speaker, non-permanent members had sought such an arrangement a decade previously. Several participants said that they would not object to returning to the earlier practice of having some of the subsidiary bodies chaired by permanent members, if the non-permanent members were in favour. The current arrangement, however, had been intended to give the elected members a larger role in carrying out the work of the Council.

Meeting formats, practices and procedures

In recent years, the Council had found it useful to meet in a wider range of formats, including greater use of informal interactive dialogues, as well as Arria-formula meetings. The informal interactive dialogues might serve both to provide information and perspectives not available through more formal formats and to bypass obstacles to hearing from some briefers in a more formal setting. The dialogue on referrals to the International Criminal Court with African delegations, for example, had been quite useful. In pursuing such innovations, it would be essential to maintain a productive balance between interactivity and efficiency. Although recent experiments to increase interactivity might have lengthened some sessions, the opportunity to have real, candid conversations with special representatives of the Secretary-General and other briefers had been worth it in terms of better informing the Council about the choices and challenges before it. A briefing on the situation in the Central African Republic, for example, had been enhanced by the willingness of members to pose searching questions. That was one initiative that they could take on their own, without the adoption of more formal reforms. The meetings of sanctions committees and other subsidiary bodies tended to be less scripted than sessions of the Council as a whole, with meetings sometimes open to other countries from the region in question, or others affected by the sanctions regime. Council members could learn from the functioning of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union because its meetings were far less scripted than those of the Security Council.

It was emphasized that consultations and public meetings should serve quite distinct purposes, but that members approached them in much the same formal manner, with too much reading of prepared statements. If they continued to act in such a formal and structured way in consultations, then the Council might as well make them public meetings instead of pretending that something secret and confidential happened there. Consultations should be more honest and interactive, akin to a real conversation. They were the backbone of the work of the Council, offering an opportunity to be creative, to improvise and to engage politically. However, repeated experiments to improve them — often employing steps agreed upon during the workshops — had had mixed results. It had been agreed, for example, that every member would not have to speak on every subject. Among the permanent members, that restraint had worked for four sessions and then broken

down. Decisions by the Council should be the product of genuine conversations and anything that could be done to achieve that was worth trying.

The employment of a wider range of briefers had allowed Council deliberations and decisions to be better informed. By hearing from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, force commanders and the Peacebuilding Commission, among others, the Council had gained a keener sense of developments on the ground in several volatile situations. Some human rights and humanitarian briefers, however, should be careful not to focus on matters that would more properly fit under the mandates of other organs. Whether or not horizon scanning succeeded as a tool, the door of the Council should always be open to officials from the Department of Peacekeeping Affairs and the Department of Political Affairs when they said that there was an emergency. Sometimes it had been possible to discuss fast-breaking situations that were not on the formal agenda of the Council by arranging urgent briefings under the item "any other business". Several participants suggested that the President should be accorded some flexibility in determining how meetings should be structured. To avoid a piecemeal approach to a given situation in which different aspects were discussed in different meetings, it would be useful to schedule a more comprehensive discussion of the overall dynamics in particular crisis situations.

Two steps discussed at earlier workshops should be adopted as standard procedure. First, the pattern of briefings by force commanders and police commissioners should be regularized. Second, the monthly luncheons with the Secretary-General had become too orchestrated and predictable. They should be transformed into more interactive and valuable exchanges on the issues of the day. In addition, as discussed at session I, the missions undertaken by sanctions committees and the Council as a whole to places of interest had provided opportunities to deliver messages and to acquire a better feel for conditions on the ground. Their budgetary and logistical implications, however, needed more attention. A participant noted the interest shown by the African Union in joining upcoming visits to Africa.

Information technology, efficiency and representation

The increasing pace of the workload of the Council could be seen in the rise in the number of meetings conducted and press statements released in 2014. The latter had been disseminated to 5,000 media outlets worldwide. Travel costs had been reduced significantly through the greatly expanded use of videoconferencing technology. Briefers had increasingly been using maps, slide presentations, videos taken by unmanned aerial vehicles (or drones) and other visual technology to good effect, but that practice had been somewhat unevenly implemented. Generally, the more information produced by the Secretariat in advance, the better informed the Council would be. Would issues of confidentiality be raised, however, if the Secretariat produced written updates in advance? In addition, in some cases, the use of maps could be politically sensitive, but the Secretariat was seeking more opportunities to employ them in presentations. Although such efficiencies in Council operations were encouraging, the aggregate annual cost of peacekeeping operations, now more than $8 billion, continued to rise. The Council should seriously review its spending on peacekeeping.

As in past workshops, there were comments about the shape and content of the Council agenda and the pace and sequencing of its meetings. The programme of work had so many set items, such as mandate renewals, that it left insufficient room for flexibility on the part of the President. Continuing efforts to thin out the calendar and rationalize the schedule and agenda should be encouraged. For example, debates on Kosovo and the Sudan were now held less frequently. One member described the formal list of Council agenda items as "a bizarre creature", which still included the question of Hyderabad, although it had not been discussed since 1949. The Council had met some 26 times on Ukraine, an item not yet on its agenda. The pace at which the Council met should vary by item and over time, as circumstances dictated. The key was to maintain as much flexibility as possible. It was also important to focus on the particular situation at hand, rather than to address overly broad and generic headings, such as "the situation in the Middle East". It could be counterproductive to place multiple items on the agenda of a single meeting and it could be confusing, even if undertaken in the name of efficiency. In terms of time management, Presidents could sometimes do more to hold members and briefers to time limits. Briefers also tended to take too long to respond to questions.

Several participants commented favourably on the idea of holding occasional meetings solely for permanent representatives, to encourage a candid exchange on particularly sensitive and/or urgent issues. It was noted that permanent representatives often did not attend meetings or did not stay until the end of meetings, even high-level meetings. The level of representation at any given session was up to the Member State, of course, and it should be assumed that any delegate at any level spoke for his or her country. For permanent members, the utilization of a permanent representative's time had to be seen over a longer time perspective, while non-permanent members might be more likely to engage more intensively and single-mindedly in the work of the Council for their two-year period of membership. In any case, drafting was usually done at the expert, rather than the ambassadorial, level. Political coordinators, it was emphasized, did much of the essential work of keeping the work flowing in the Council. The practice of political coordinators meeting regularly as a group was well established, as were relations among permanent representatives. Why, then, had there been no similar grouping among deputy permanent representatives, whose place in the life of the Council appeared less defined and appreciated?

Session III
Lessons learned: reflections of the class of 2014

Moderator

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Ambassador Gary Quinlan
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Reflections

In different ways, each of the outgoing delegates spoke of their time in the Council as a positive and affirming experience. None expressed buyer's remorse. Although it had involved demanding working hours, serving on the Council had been gratifying personally, as well as for one's country. It had been a chance to have an impact on the lives of many and had been, for that reason, a humbling experience. Those serving there should never forget the primary responsibility of the Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. Given that the Council was an experiment built on the legacy of 100 million lives lost, one had to be constantly aware of the awesome responsibility of not letting that experiment fail, as the League of Nations had. Although others measured the Council on the basis of its failures, serving there provided moments of real excitement and satisfaction. For the Council, it was a time of transformational change. For those representing non-permanent members, the time flew by. It seemed only yesterday that they were hearing at the workshop about the experiences and lessons learned of the class of 2012. The inevitable frustrations notwithstanding, it had been a rewarding experience and an opportunity to learn about many things and many parts of the world from a unique perspective. Several speakers referred to how much each of their delegations had learned about regions and situations that had not been central to their national foreign policies, as well as gaining expertise in drafting and negotiating multilateral texts and in building common ground where none had existed.

The dynamics of the Council, its chemistry and its priorities, changed each year with the turnover of half the non-permanent members. To some degree, it reflected the world as it was at any point in time. The class of 2014, according to several participants, had been a particularly collegial group, with a marked sense of team spirit. That had allowed them to work on common projects and to be unusually productive as a group, not just as individual delegations. They had left their mark, individually and collectively, on the human rights cluster, on children and armed conflict, on women, peace and security, on working methods, on non-proliferation, on sanctions, on small arms, on humanitarian affairs, on conflict prevention, on peacekeeping, on peacebuilding and on genocide prevention and the responsibility to protect, among other areas. The progress made on the reform of Council working methods, in part through the workshops, spoke to the adage that change best comes from within, rather than being imposed from the outside. At the same time, it was ironic that the Council appeared to be functioning so well internally in a period of growing turmoil in several parts of the world. Participants could only trust that the world would not get worse while the Council got better.

Four words used frequently by the outgoing members in describing their approach to their terms on the Council were pragmatism, transparency, relationships and ambition. Participants noted, as well, unexpected things that they had learned in

the Council. Several had been struck by how much the Council had changed since their country had last served on it. Not only were there more meetings, more decisions, more peacekeeping missions and more subsidiary bodies, but also the Council had come to address conflicts much more systematically and institutionally. There was, however, still much that the non-permanent members could do to make the Council a fairer, more credible and more legitimate place. Having witnessed how hard it was to achieve consensus in the Council, especially on the use of force, the concept of a standing United Nations force looked far less attractive, given how protracted decisions about when and where to use it could prove to be. It had also sometimes been surprising to find out who would produce relevant new information in briefings of the Council.

Assessment

As those reflections suggested, on the whole the outgoing members assessed the accomplishments of the Council over the past two years in relatively positive terms, as did the continuing members. Although they had sometimes had to face turf battles within the Secretariat, together with political divisions among the members of the Council, each outgoing member had been able to carve out some priority issues and pursue them with some consistency. Many of those priorities fell within the so-called human rights cluster: mainstreaming children and armed conflict; support for the International Criminal Court in its efforts to end impunity; sanctions against the Central African Republic; the two resolutions on humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic; resolution 2150 (2014) on the prevention of genocide; and the presidential statement on the root causes of conflict (S/PRST/2013/4). The peacekeeping mission in South Sudan had been reinforced and its mandate reprioritized to focus more on the protection of civilians, human rights monitoring and supporting the delivery of humanitarian assistance (resolution 2155 (2014)), while those in Mali and the Central African Republic had been made more robust in order to respond to changing conditions on the ground. The non-permanent members had contributed to the longer-term development of international law in the areas of children and armed conflict, human rights and humanitarian law. Over the long haul — perhaps measured in decades rather than years — those might be their most fundamental contributions, above and beyond specific resolutions and presidential statements.

Over the previous two years, various techniques and tools had been employed to draw attention to the plight of children affected by armed conflict. Through the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, field trips had been undertaken, briefings by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court and the Chair of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union arranged, press statements released, videoconferences held and a resolution and a presidential statement adopted in 2014. Child-related provisions, including the inclusion of child protection advisers, had been added to peacekeeping mandates. Sustained attention had been devoted to situations, such as those in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Central African Republic, where violence against children had been particularly horrific.

Through parallel intergovernmental and Secretariat review processes, an ambitious effort had been launched to make sanctions a more contemporary and intelligent instrument for the Council. It had been based on the widely accepted premise that sanctions were one of the primary tools available to the Council for

both prevention and protection, often preferable to the coercive use of force and targeted against armed groups and individuals more often than Governments or populations. Currently, all the sanctions committees were headed by non-permanent members of the Council, meaning that getting their design and implementation right should be of keen interest to all members, not least those newly elected. It was recommended that the proceedings of sanctions committees should be kept as transparent as possible, including the holding of open briefings when appropriate and the posting of the dates for their meetings in the *Journal*, as discussed above in the section on session II.

As noted in the summary of session II above, the outgoing members had contributed actively to the process of improving the working methods of the Council. At times, however, that effort had been frustrating, given that the weight of the status quo in the Council could be overwhelming. It was as though there had been a "no questions asked" policy, including, without a substantive explanation, resistance to changing any previously agreed language in drafts. Two steps to improving working methods were mentioned in session III (a more extensive discussion can be found in the section on session II above). The reintroduction of wrap-up sessions had been a substantive success and one welcomed by many members and non-members of the Council. Ironically, however, as those sessions had become more reflective and analytical, attendance had declined. Fresh ideas were needed about how to draw more non-members to those sessions. If horizon-scanning sessions were not revived, then a substitute was needed (see the discussion in session II above). More reflection was required at an earlier point if the Council was to be more effective at either conflict prevention or management.

The participants identified items that would require continuing attention from the incoming and continuing members in 2015. For all the contention over some issues, the Council had managed to achieve consensus the vast majority of the time. Two generic political issues stood out. First, achieving agreement across political lines would again be a challenge in 2015, as in every previous year. Publics and parliaments across the world knew relatively little about the work of the Council and it commanded too little respect from key constituencies. Second, although the Council tended to be introspective, given its internal politics, over the longer term it should be concerned about how it was perceived by the wider world as well.

For the incoming members, the challenge would be to understand and continue the valuable, but unfinished, work of the outgoing members. As discussed above, at the thematic level there had been a surge of interest in conflict prevention in 2014. The challenge in 2015 would be translating that interest into practice within the Council and in the field. More reflection was needed on how to incorporate accountability as an essential element of the prevention of conflict and atrocities. As a matter of course, the broader protection and humanitarian agendas, including the Human Rights Up Front initiative, needed to be further integrated into the work of the Council. Of the many situations of concern, that in South Sudan was particularly worrisome, not least because of the deep involvement of the United Nations in the creation and fate of that country from the outset. Strengthening the impact of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Security Council on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa had also been a continuing challenge. It could potentially provide horizon scanning concerning emerging conflict situations on the continent, its geographical mandate could be expanded and it might meet at the level of deputy permanent representative.

Relationships

A participant commented that at the workshop, in contrast to some previous years, there had been relatively little talk of the dynamics of the Council being defined by differences between the permanent and non-permanent members. Indeed, there had been few references to the E-10 (10 elected members) and P-5 (5 permanent members). As another speaker put it, there were 15 members, not 5 plus 10. One might not like it, noted a third interlocutor, but the Charter conferred permanence and the veto power. Although everyone would prefer that the permanent members show restraint on their exercise of the veto, there was no point in tilting at windmills. If one wished to be proactive and make a difference on the Council, one would recognize the realities and be pragmatic. To get things done, agreed another participant, one needed to engage the permanent members, as had been the case with the resolutions on humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic. For their part, the permanent members could do a better job of sharing data, information and expertise with elected members and could be more proactive on questions relating to reform of the Council.

In the Council, one built alliances issue by issue, whether with permanent members, non-permanent members or both. On most substantive questions, interests and perspectives were not defined by one's status on the Council. In some cases, two members might have tense bilateral relations outside the Council, yet find grounds for working together more collegially within it. Although elected members liked to complain about the permanent members, it was important to recognize that there were structural reasons for them seeing things differently on some institutional matters. It was incumbent on the non-permanent members to bring fresh ideas and new approaches in their two years on the Council, while permanent members had to maintain long-term working relationships and ensure that the strengths and viability of the Council as an institution were maintained over time. The permanent members, moreover, were more likely to have geostrategic interests to defend that were global in scope.

The permanent members, moreover, needed the non-permanent members. They could not attain consensus, something that they valued, or even the nine votes needed for decisions without the support of at least four elected members. On presidential statements and press statements, non-permanent members had veto power. In drafting resolutions, penholders were usually ready to accommodate the views of the elected members. As noted earlier, the non-permanent members could sometimes play a crucial bridging role when the permanent members were divided, as with the resolutions on humanitarian access in the Syrian Arab Republic. For their part, permanent members, with their long experience and legions of experts, often had information and expertise that they were willing to share with the incoming members. It was helpful, therefore, to engage with the permanent members before beginning one's term on the Council. Some of them had excellent training programmes for newly elected members. On sanctions, the permanent members might be the architects, but non-permanent members acted as the implementing engineers in their roles as Chairs of the sanctions committees.

Lessons learned

The newly elected members received ample advice from the outgoing members, who readily shared their insights, best practices and lessons learned. Their advice included the following points:

- Think big. Do not be too modest. The responsibility of serving on the Council requires making assessments and judgments about distant conflicts and contributing actively to the Council's deliberations and work. The Council cannot be neutral or passive when it comes to the maintenance of international peace and security.
- Do not wait and see. Be proactive and get involved early. Two years is a short period to get acclimatized and make a difference.
- Take the pen and hold on to it. Drafting is a task for permanent and non-permanent members alike.
- Size does not matter. The quality and value of one's inputs are not dependent on the size of one's delegation or country.
- Commitment and resolve do matter. So do fresh ideas and firm values. Work for consensus, but do not be shy if you feel strongly about breaking silence on a press statement.
- Find one or more niches early and stick with them. Leave your mark on one or a few high priority areas where you can make a difference. They will be your legacy.
- Have both a clear agenda and organizing principles. Without them, it is easy to become lost or diverted in the fast-paced, multidimensional and high-pressure world of the Council. If you lose direction, the Council can be an unforgiving environment. But do not forget that other members and many outside the Council have a stake in your success.
- Build networks wherever possible, especially on the issues that matter most to your delegations, with members and non-members of the Council, with the Secretariat, with civil society and independent experts and think tanks, and with parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and the media.
- Engage and share information across those thematic and situation-specific networks. Engage the best independent thinkers that you can find on substantive issues and on the work of the Council.
- Get assistance, training and feedback wherever and whenever it could be helpful. Do not hesitate to learn from the experience of others and from specialized expertise, including on regional and country histories and dynamics, as well as on the rules, procedures and history of the Council. The Security Council Affairs Division and Security Council Report, among others, are there to help.
- Initiate and participate in dialogues between outgoing and incoming members. They were in your shoes just two years ago. They will have empathy.
- Be transparent and visible. Utilize the Security Council press stakeout following meetings and engage the media.

- Chairing committees and working groups is an opportunity, not just a burden. Stick with those leadership assignments for the full two years. Make the best of them. Those groups do, or should do, important work.
- Make the most of the handover. The Secretariat will give you useful papers, but only the outgoing delegations can give you the insider insights that can be invaluable, especially in avoiding past mistakes. Implement the measures agreed upon in document S/2014/393.
- Take the chairmanship of a sanctions committee very seriously. It is demanding but rewarding work. Make proceedings more transparent. All delegations should have a dedicated sanctions coordinator.
- Organize your mission so that it has the right division of labour for the tasks at hand and revise as needed. Pay attention to national capitals, including executive branch officials, parliamentarians and civil society groups. They can make your life easier or much more difficult.
- Have fun. Make a difference.